

B2 4. (Twice Amended) The cutting machine for cutting the flat cardboard plate as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the level adjusting mechanism is operable to selectively elevate and lower the support table.

B3 5. (Once Amended) The cutting machine for cutting the flat cardboard plate as claimed in Claim 6, further comprising a support structure for rotatably supporting the first and second rotary cutters and wherein the drive mechanism is operable to move the support structure relative to the flat cardboard plate.

6. (Twice Amended) A cutting machine for cutting a flat cardboard plate having a cardboard, said cutting machine comprising:

B4 a first rotary cutter for cutting an upper portion of the flat cardboard plate;  
a second rotary cutter rotatable in a direction counter to a direction of rotation of the first rotary cutter for cutting a lower portion of the flat cardboard plate;  
a drive mechanism for driving the first and second rotary cutters relative to the flat cardboard plate along a single cutting line to cut the flat cardboard plate along such cutting line;  
a support table for supporting from below the flat cardboard plate, and a level adjusting mechanism for adjusting a relative position between the support table and the first and second rotary cutters in a direction up and down according to a thickness of the flat cardboard plate to be

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cut and for setting a boundary between respective depth of cutting by the first and second rotary cutters to a value substantially equal to one half of a thickness of the flat cardboard plate; and a retaining mechanism for pressing a portion of the flat cardboard plate on a trailing side of the cutting line with respect to a direction of feed of the flat cardboard plate against the support table by moving a retainer bar only in a vertical direction to retain the flat cardboard plate immovable during a cutting operation.

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8. (Once Amended) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the adjusting mechanism is further operable to set a boundary between respective depth of cutting by the first and second rotary cutters to a value substantially equal to one half of a thickness of the article.

9. (Once Amended) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 11, wherein each of the first and second rotary cutters rotates in such a direction as to permit a leading portion of the respective rotary cutter, with respect to a direction of movement relative to the article, to plunge into the article.

10. (Once Amended) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the level adjusting mechanism is operable to selectively elevate and lower the support table.

11. (Once Amended) A cutting machine comprising:

a first rotary cutter operable to cut an upper portion of an article;

a second rotary cutter which rotates in a direction counter to a direction of rotation of the  
first rotary cutter and operable to cut a lower portion of the article;

a drive mechanism operable to drive the first and second rotary cutters relative to the  
article along a single cutting line to cut the article along such cutting line;

a support table operable to support from below the article, and a level adjusting  
mechanism operable to adjust a relative position between the support table and the first and  
second rotary cutters in a vertical direction according to a thickness of the article to be cut; and

a retaining mechanism operable to press a portion of the article on a trailing side of the  
cutting line with respect to a direction of feed of the article against the support table to retain the  
article immovable during a cutting operation.

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**Please add the following new claims:**

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12. (New) A cutting machine comprising:

a first rotary cutter operable to cut an upper portion of an article;

a second rotary cutter which rotates in a direction counter to a direction of rotation of the  
first rotary cutter and operable to cut a lower portion of the article;

a drive mechanism operable to drive the first and second rotary cutters in a back and forth  
motion along a single cutting line; and

a support table operable to support from below the article, and a level adjusting mechanism operable to adjust a relative position between the support table and the first and second rotary cutters in a vertical direction according to a thickness of the article to be cut.

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13. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the adjusting mechanism is further operable to set a boundary between respective depth of cutting by the first and second rotary cutters to a value substantially equal to one half of a thickness of the article.

14. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 12, wherein each of the first and second rotary cutters rotates in such a direction as to permit a leading portion of the respective rotary cutter, with respect to a direction of movement relative to the article, to plunge into the article.

15. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the level adjusting mechanism is operable to selectively elevate and lower the support table.

16. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in Claim 12, further comprising a retaining mechanism operable to press a portion of the article on a trailing side of the cutting line with respect to a direction of feed of the article against the support table to retain the article immovable during a cutting operation.

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17. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in claim 12, wherein the article is maintained in a stationary position when the drive mechanism drives the first and second rotary cutters in the lateral direction relative to the article along the single cutting line.

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18. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in claim 6, wherein the flat cardboard plate is maintained in a stationary position when the drive mechanism drives the first and second rotary cutters relative to the flat cardboard plate along the single cutting line.

19. (New) The cutting machine as claimed in claim 11, wherein the article is maintained in a stationary position when the drive mechanism drives the first and second rotary cutters relative to the article along the single cutting line.

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